

Ike and his Spies in the Sky

Eisenhower, Fearing a Surprise Soviet Attack, Pushed for Better Intelligence, Approved U-2 Flights

By David Haight

As Supreme Allied Commander in Europe in World War II, Dwight D. Eisenhower ordered one of the biggest surprise attacks in world history—the D-day landing on the coast of France on June 6, 1944, which marked the beginning of the end for the German Third Reich. But before making the final decision to launch the attack, he wanted the best intelligence available, and he got it.

Nearly a decade later, as President of the United States, Eisenhower was still concerned about surprise attacks—but this time he was worried about a Pearl Harbor-style attack on the United States by a nuclear-armed Soviet Union. And again, Eisenhower wanted the best available intelligence. But getting it and managing it proved to be more difficult than it had been the decade before.

Eisenhower understood that knowledge based on reliable intelligence is power and that the Soviet Union posed a grave threat to America's security. He knew that the Soviets were testing nuclear weapons and developing long-range bombers to deliver them.



It was important to pierce the Soviets' curtain of secrecy, but information about their military capabilities was proving elusive to the techniques of traditional espionage.

Records in the holdings of the Eisenhower Presidential Library in Abilene, Kansas, reveal how the 34th President dealt with his desire for quality intelligence about the Soviets' military activities while balancing the risks involved in getting that information against those of setting off a full-scale war with the former World War II ally.

Balancing those risks presented him with a dilemma, as depicted by the record of the 157th meeting of the National Security Council on July 31, 1953, just over six months after he took office.

The director of the Central Intelligence Agency, Allen Dulles, reported that the Soviet Union had recently developed a new heavy bomber with an estimated range of 6,000 miles and capable of reaching any point in the United States and returning to the USSR. At this same meeting, Gen. Omar Bradley, chairman of the



President Dwight D. Eisenhower appreciated the importance of aerial intelligence gathering. U 2 reconnaissance aircraft (opposite page) began flying over the USSR in 1956.

Joint Chiefs of Staff, briefed the President and the council on the loss of a U.S. Air Force plane, an RB-50, in the Sea of Japan.

The ensuing discussion revealed that the United States also shot down Russian planes that approached U.S. ships too closely. The President said that both the Americans and the Russians knew that if U.S. planes flew toward Vladivostok, they were not on training missions. As Eisenhower said, this shoot-down was not as unprovoked as it might have seemed. In this case, the former five-star general could see the matter from the Soviet viewpoint and appeared to play it down not only to avoid public discussion of sensitive intelligence operations but also to avoid domestic pressure to retaliate against the Soviets.

Were these aerial missions worth the risk, loss, and expense invested in them?

Many writers have attempted to answer this question by studying the available evidence. These flights were hidden in a cloak of secrecy, and even now many details are unclear either because of continuing security protection or because of the lack of written documentation.

Nevertheless, through varying levels of archival processing and researcher-generated declassification requests, a large volume of the historical record of Eisenhower's management and employment of intelligence has been made available to researchers at the Eisenhower Library. Anyone familiar with 20th-century records is aware that declassifying intelligence information is often difficult and time consuming. Despite the fact that certain intelligence-related documents in the library are likely to remain security classified for years to come, significant progress has been achieved in releasing information on many intelligence topics. The declassified records, in their original context, are dependent upon historians to give narrative perspective to their archival existence.

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To counter the menace of Soviet military might, the Eisenhower administration developed a strategic posture policy, known as the "New Look." This basic national security policy, approved in late

1953, included an expansion of U.S. intelligence collection and analysis.

The President placed top priority on this, and to drive home a sense of urgency, he told the military service chiefs in late 1954 that for the first time the United States had reason to be frightened for its safety because an enemy armed with the new (nuclear) weapons could knock out the nation within 30 days.

Eisenhower authorized aerial intelligence-collecting programs in order to better assess the military capability of the Soviet Union, China, and other Communist-bloc nations to launch a surprise attack on the United States. He approved overflights of the Soviet Union by military aircraft in a highly compartmentalized intelligence program labeled SENSINT (Sensitive Intelligence). Despite the risks of Soviet retaliation, U.S. military aircraft flew directly over the Soviet territory from early 1954 until late 1956.

The U.S. Air Force developed balloons equipped with cameras and flew them over Soviet bloc countries under the guise of meteorological research. The balloon program, which Eisenhower approved with misgivings in 1955, yielded more protests from the Kremlin than it did useful intelligence information. Eisenhower ordered balloon flights over Russia stopped in 1956, but various schemes for launching balloons floated as late as 1958.

When the President at Geneva in 1955 sought Soviet agreement to a mutual exchange of military information with the United States, First Secretary of the Communist Party Nikita Khrushchev and the Soviet delegation rejected his initiative. Eisenhower, therefore, relied on covert or black operations, emphasizing overhead intelligence collection as a major part of the United States' effort to meet this threat of surprise attack.

Meanwhile, in 1956, U-2 aircraft began flying over the Soviet Union. Unlike the SENSINT program, the U-2 program was directed by the CIA, a civilian agency, and piloted by civilians. Eisenhower, while realizing the provocative nature of military aircraft flown by military personnel over or around the Soviet Union, continued throughout his administration to approve



James R. Killian, being sworn in here as special assistant to the President for science and technology, was a key adviser to the President on organizing and developing U.S. intelligence capabilities to warn of a possible Soviet surprise attack.



Andrew Goodpaster, White House staff secretary, was the President's right-hand man in managing overhead intelligence collection programs.

missions conducted on the periphery of the Soviet Union and mainland China.

These flights, begun under President Harry S. Truman, increased tensions between the United States and the Soviet Union and led to many attacks on these planes with the loss of planes and personnel. Nevertheless, Eisenhower permitted such missions to collect communications and electronic intelligence and photograph Soviet air and naval facilities while ferreting out the Soviet radar systems.

The Eisenhower administration's overhead intelligence, or aerial reconnaissance, programs were inspired in large part by the recommendations of James R. Killian, president of Massachusetts Institute of Technology, and Edwin "Din" Land, president of Polaroid Corporation, both serving on the President's Technological Capabilities Panel (TCP), appointed by the President in 1954.

The panel, with Killian as chairman and Land an active member, conducted an extensive study of the surprise attack problem and passed on to the President recommendations concerning intelligence collection. The TCP described the periphery of the Soviet Union as a fruitful area for collecting intelligence. In addition to recommending risky aerial reconnaissance flights, the TCP also pointed out the intelligence potential of reconnaissance satellites. Moreover, the panel saw space-based satellite operations as a way to establish the legal right to operate in space while avoiding the

dangers posed by aircraft flying over and around the Soviet Union.

Although Killian and Land helped convince the President to embark on many technologically advanced programs, the man primarily responsible for assisting the President manage these programs was Andrew Jackson Goodpaster.

Upon assuming the post of White House staff secretary in the fall of 1954, Colonel Goodpaster served as the President's liaison with the executive agencies responsible for intelligence, military, and international affairs. He was the President's "go-to" man, the person Eisenhower counted on to help oversee the Cold War aerial reconnaissance programs. His records contain a treasure trove of documentation pertaining to high-altitude balloons, the U-2 aircraft and its missions, other aerial missions flown along the periphery of the USSR, and plans for the development of reconnaissance satellites.

In November 1954, the President acted on one of the TCP proposals by approving funding for "thirty special high performance aircraft" as described by Goodpaster's memorandum of a conference with the President. The first successful mission of these "special high performance aircraft," also known as the U-2, flew over the Soviet Union in July 1956. From the outset of the U-2 missions, Soviet radar spotted the planes. This vulnerability spurred the development of another TCP panel proposal, the reconnaissance satellite.

In February 1958, Eisenhower officially approved the program code-named CORONA, which eventually produced photographic images taken in outer space and recovered from satellite capsules.

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Many U.S. government civilian and military agencies collected intelligence on the Soviet Union and other potential adversaries during the years of intense Cold War activities. Eisenhower attempted throughout his administration to establish better control and coordination of these agencies' intelligence activities.

In 1956 he established the President's Board of Consultants on Foreign Intelligence Activities (PBCFIA) to provide

advice and oversight on U.S. intelligence programs. In creating the board, the President sought advice from selected citizens with experience in government service, science and technology, or other executive responsibilities. Eisenhower picked Killian as the first chairman of PBCFIA, which also included World War II hero Gen. James Doolittle, another of the President's key advisers on intelligence.

While Eisenhower continued to use aerial reconnaissance to acquire strategic intelligence aimed at reducing the threat of a Soviet surprise attack on the United States, he endeavored, with only limited success, to implement the PBCFIA's recommendations for better administrative control of these diverse intelligence operations.

On August 22, 1956, the Chinese shot down a Navy plane in the Sea of Japan, resulting in the loss of the entire 16-man crew. In an August 30 meeting with Adm. Arthur Radford, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Eisenhower, the man who had ordered tens of thousands of men to storm the beaches of Normandy, talked not about the lost personnel but instead about the failure of the involved U.S. agencies to develop a cover plan for such situations. He went on to state his concern over the apparent lack of control by the military agencies of such missions, but after further discussion, he agreed to allow further missions provided they were done with great care and following strict requirements. Thus we see a President concerned over tight control, management, and plausible cover for provocative intelligence-gathering missions.

In October 1957 the PBCFIA affirmed its support of overhead reconnaissance efforts because of their potential for collecting valuable intelligence on Soviet military facilities, including missile-launching sites and air bases. At the same time, the PBCFIA conveyed to the President the urgent need to expedite reconnaissance satellite development.

On February 7, 1958, Killian and Land briefed the President on reconnaissance satellite activities. Since 1956 the Air Force had conducted plans to design and build reconnaissance satellites under a program termed WS (Weapons System) 117L. At

this meeting the President agreed that a plan for film recovery be separated from the WS 117L in expectation of acquiring intelligence data sooner.

The administration established the Advanced Research Project Agency (ARPA) within the Department of Defense, which would run the military aspects of the satellite recovery program, but ARPA would be answerable to the CIA because the President insisted on civilian control and tight secrecy for this program. Goodpaster made sure that Killian and Land understood the President's intention that the CIA would direct the intelligence phases of the program, which Eisenhower formally approved on April 21 as Project CORONA.

By 1958 the press was speculating publicly concerning reconnaissance aspects of the WS 117L program. To avoid this unwanted public scrutiny, the administration separated this new black or covert satellite program from WS 117L. The administration hid it by concocting a biomedical space research project termed DISCOVERER. The Department of Defense guidance for responding to public inquiries concerning the DISCOVERER satellite launchings contained the following language:

The purpose of ARPA's PROJECT DISCOVERER is to continue development of a number of systems and techniques

which will be employed in the operation of space vehicles....The initial launchings primarily will be to test the vehicle itself, especially its propulsion and guidance. Later, the satellites will contain biomedical specimens to seek data on environmental conditions which will be useful to the man-in-space program being carried out jointly by ARPA and the National Aeronautics and Space Administration. As part of this program, live animals also will be carried aloft and their recovery attempted in order to develop the techniques involved.

A memorandum anticipating press inquiries listed a number of questions and the answers to be given. Question #1 "Is the Discoverer a reconnaissance satellite?" The answer to be given was "No." Other questions and recommended answers were designed to steer media inquiry away from any connection with military programs involving reconnaissance satellites (WS 117L).

(Eisenhower, in his insistence on secrecy for space-based intelligence programs, undoubtedly agreed with Winston Churchill's statement to Joseph Stalin at the Tehran Conference in November 1943, "Truth deserves a bodyguard of lies.")

ARPA generated numerous documents

reporting on the progress of DISCOVERER. In reality, however, they were actually covering for the highly secret Project CORONA. This cover plan succeeded in hiding CORONA from public or Soviet scrutiny until 1995, more than a quarter-century after Eisenhower's death, when the United States officially acknowledged its existence.

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Until reconnaissance satellites could become operational, however, the administration felt compelled to rely on the provocative peripheral and overflight missions to collect data on Soviet air and missile bases and to seek evidence of any Soviet war preparations.

From the time the first U-2 flight appeared over the Soviet Union in July 1956, the Soviets tracked almost every mission, particularly those flown west of the Urals. In a December 16, 1958, meeting with the President's Foreign Intelligence Advisory Board, Eisenhower reiterated the one question that mattered: "Is the intelligence which we receive from this source [overflights] worth the exacerbation of international tensions which results?"

Eisenhower believed the flights had located adequate targets for intelligence collection. But he also realized that the U-2 flights did not solve the problem of surprise attack. The PBCFIA, after hearing the President express his concerns, concluded that the intelligence thus obtained was worthwhile and recommended that the flights continue.

The President continued to worry about international tensions and retained firm control, saying "yea" or "nay" over each proposed flight. Goodpaster's memoranda recorded these affirmative and negative presidential actions, each influ-



President Eisenhower holds an American flag taken from the capsule recovered from Discoverer XIII. This capsule, although not containing the KH-1 camera, was a trial run for Discoverer XIV launched on August 18, 1960, which contained the camera and collected the first photographic images recovered from a U.S. reconnaissance satellite. Shown with the President are Dudley C. Sharp; Secretary of Defense Thomas Gates; and Gen. Thomas White, August 15, 1960.

~~TOP SECRET~~

April 21, 1958

MEMORANDUM FOR RECORD

Following top-level check, I advised CIA that Project Corona is approved as set forth in the memorandum of April 16, 1958 (COR-0014) subject to requirement that all funding for development and hardware must come from:

- a) CIA
- b) ARPA

A. J. Goodpaster
Brigadier General, USA



Memorandum for the Record by Andrew Goodpaster recording the President's approval of Project CORONA.

Image of Mys Shmida airfield, USSR, CORONA mission 9009 (Discoverer XIV). This was the first successful recovery of imagery taken by a reconnaissance satellite.

enced by the current international situation. For example, on March 4, 1959, with the Berlin situation heating up, Goodpaster recorded:

At the President's request, I advised General [Nathan] Twining [chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff] that the President has decided to disapprove any additional special flights by the U-2 in the present abnormally tense circumstances.

In a February 10, 1959, meeting, the President expressed hope in technological advancements including the CORONA project as well as the more advanced plane, the SR-71. He continued to listen to Killian and Land on such matters as the monitoring of Soviet missile firings and the progress of CORONA.

Throughout the February 10 meeting, the President demonstrated his interest in obtaining as much information on the Soviet missiles as possible and also in details of missile production and acceleration. He also commented on leaks by "irresponsible officials and demagogues." He remarked that some senators seemed to be responsible for the leaks, while at the same time munitions makers were striving to get more contracts and appeared to be exerting undue influence over these senators. Did the President have this kind of thing in mind when he made his famous reference to the "military-industrial complex" in his farewell address

on January 17, 1961?

At any rate, politicians such as Missouri Senator Stuart Symington, a former secretary of the Air Force who was running for President in 1960, raised allegations of a "missile gap," claiming the United States was falling behind the Soviet Union in missile production and deployment. Information from the risky U-2 missions, however, helped confirm Eisenhower's judgment that the so-called "missile gap" did not exist and allowed him to more readily resist calls for massive increases in military spending that might have accelerated a U.S.-Soviet arms race.

Throughout the spring and summer of 1959, the President continued to express concern over the risks of continuing these reconnaissance flights and to worry over Soviet reactions to them. In a July 8, 1959, meeting with Secretary of State Christian Herter, CIA Director Allen Dulles, and Richard Bissell, the CIA's deputy director for plans, he asked "whether we are getting to the point where we must decide if we are trying to prepare to fight a war or to prevent one." Nevertheless, because of the unanimous recommendations by his advisers, the President agreed to the flight under consideration at that time.

One of the best examples of the President's agonizing over these overflights is a memorandum for the record documenting his meeting with his PBCFIA on February 2, 1960.

As the board pushed for using over-

flights to collect intelligence to the maximum degree possible, the President pointed out the "soul-searching" he engaged in when he considered approval for each flight. Gen. John Hull, chairman of the board, pointed out that a recent flight disclosed military deployments that gave no sign of a slackening off of Soviet military power as might have been suggested by the "spirit of Camp David." (The Eisenhower-Khrushchev conversations at Camp David in September 1959 had encouraged hope in some quarters that tensions between the United States and the USSR might be easing.)

Eisenhower responded that while he knew of no "spirit of Camp David," these talks had been a frank and respectful discussion of key issues and accomplished a mutual recognition by Eisenhower and Khrushchev that it was critically important to avoid general war. Eisenhower viewed the data on Soviet missile sites he had seen as corroborating what Khrushchev had told him at Camp David.

While Hull and the board continued to focus on the intelligence value of overflights, the President said that he was putting on the line his one asset in a summit meeting: his reputation for honesty. If one of these aircraft was lost while the United States was engaged in apparently sincere deliberations, it could be put on display in Moscow and ruin the President's effectiveness as a negotiator. Nevertheless, the

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ICBM TARGETS -- THE URALS AND TYURA TAM

EO 12958
3.4(b)(1)>25Yrs
(S)

There is no information available on the pattern or the whereabouts of ICBM deployment though the suspicion that ICBMs are being deployed is very strong. From analysis of TYURA TAM photography we strongly suspect that deployment is geared to major railway lines either for logistical support to hardstands or launch from trains themselves or both. The most likely area for ICBM launch site deployment satisfying this requirement, along with those of maximum security from observation and proximity to production areas, is the Urals. Recent analysis [redacted] shows a guided missile associated activity in the vicinity of VERKHNAYA SALDA just off major rail lines 75 miles north of SVERDLOVSK. Beyond these two leads our objective would be to obtain coverage of major rail lines in the Urals.

A critical target area bearing on the missile question is TYURA TAM, coverage of which is now twenty months old. Today the suspected second launch site there with its hooked rail line is probably complete with telltale appurtenances which may suggest deployment schemes. Training may well be going on in preparation for deployment. The out-sized launch pad exceeds the requirements for launch of any ICBM or earth satellite vehicles extant. Coverage of the rangehead could give us valuable leads or outright evidence of their plans and capabilities in the ICBM field.

EO 12958 3.4(b)(1)>25Yrs
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Khrushchev claims that the USSR is in series production of ICBM, that the Soviets already have a mobile capability with IRBM and will shortly have with ICBM. We have no information to confirm or deny this. [redacted]

SVERDLOVSK in the Urals is the best bet on the location of a major ICBM factory. We might well obtain key information from photography that would lead us to a sound appraisal of production.

Under present staging plans the foregoing highly critical targets could be covered in a single mission with very significant additional benefits from bonus coverage of highly critical nuclear weapons targets, namely, VERKHNE NEYVINSKIY, NIZHNYAYA TURA, and KYSHTYM.

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On March 31, 1959, the CIA sent the White House an intelligence note about possible ICBM launching sites in the Urals.

board members insisted on continuing the overflights while hoping that the SR-71, much less vulnerable to tracking and attack than was the U-2, would soon be operational.

The overflights continued, and on April 25, 1960, Goodpaster wrote a brief one-paragraph memorandum stating: "After checking with the President, I informed Mr. Bissell that one additional operation [U-2 overflight of the USSR] may be undertaken, provided it is carried out prior to May 1. No operation is to be carried out after May 1."

As is well known, that operation carried out on May 1 was the U-2 flight over the Soviet Union piloted by Francis Gary Pow-

ers. It was brought down, apparently by a missile that damaged but did not destroy the plane, thus enabling Powers to parachute safely. Power's plane was also apparently the only plane downed deep within the Soviet Union.

The Soviets captured Powers and put what was claimed to be the wreckage of his plane on display. The international furor created by this incident forced Khrushchev, probably under pressure himself in the Kremlin, to make demands on Eisenhower at the beginning of the Paris summit conference on May 16, 1960. Khrushchev, not receiving the apologetic response from Eisenhower he demanded, then walked out, effectively wrecking the summit.

One might ask why the President sent a U-2 mission over the USSR only two weeks before the Paris summit conference. Eisenhower apparently accepted the need for as much data as possible on Soviet intercontinental ballistic missile deployment before talking to the Soviets at the Paris conference. He also knew of indications that the Soviets were about to develop the capability to shoot down a U-2. Therefore the President appears to have believed that he had good intelligence on the Soviets' military capabilities and intentions, but there was just enough doubt in his mind to motivate him to seek more. Although he knew the CORONA project was making progress, it still, as of May 1960, had not achieved success. In fact, the first 12 DISCOVERER missions were failures. So he did not know when CORONA would produce the intelligence he sought.

Eisenhower lamented the results of the U-2 affair, and in a July 11, 1960, meeting dealing primarily with Cuba, he remarked that all of his advisers, including Secretary of State John Foster Dulles, missed badly on their estimates regarding the international impact resulting from a U-2 failure. Eisenhower did not want to say "I told you so" but recalled he was the only one who had heavily weighted this aspect of these operations.

The President had reason to be frustrated. The CIA had advised him that it was highly unlikely that the Soviets could track U-2 flights. In fact, almost from the beginning, Soviet radar picked up and tracked these flights. The CIA had also assured the President that it was almost a certainty that no pilot would survive a shootdown of a U-2 aircraft. Yet the Soviets captured Powers alive.

Eisenhower vowed not to send U-2 planes over the Soviet Union any more. This did not, however, mean the cessation of all U.S. aerial reconnaissance programs conducted on the periphery of the Soviet Union and other Communist territories. On July 1, 1960—the day the Soviets shot down a U.S. RB-47 plane conducting reconnaissance in the Barents Sea along the northern coast of the USSR—the President received a briefing on the status of

these aerial peripheral reconnaissance missions.

The record of this briefing, a seven-page memorandum, is currently partially declassified, with sizeable portions remaining classified. Nevertheless, enough has been released to provide numerous details on units, locations of missions, and their common purpose: to collect communications intelligence (COMINT), electronic intelligence (ELINT), and photography. After this briefing, Eisenhower approved General Twining's request to resume these COMINT and ELINT collecting missions. The memorandum of this conversation points out British performance of similar missions and also mentions the concept of Soviet and even Swedish fighters "pacing" these reconnaissance aircraft. While recognizing the risks involved with these peripheral missions, the President insisted that they were legal. General Twining assured the President that "great care would be taken

Below: Maps of U-2 routes over Soviet missile areas and Ural railroad system, March 1959.

to insure that the flights are no more provocative than necessary."

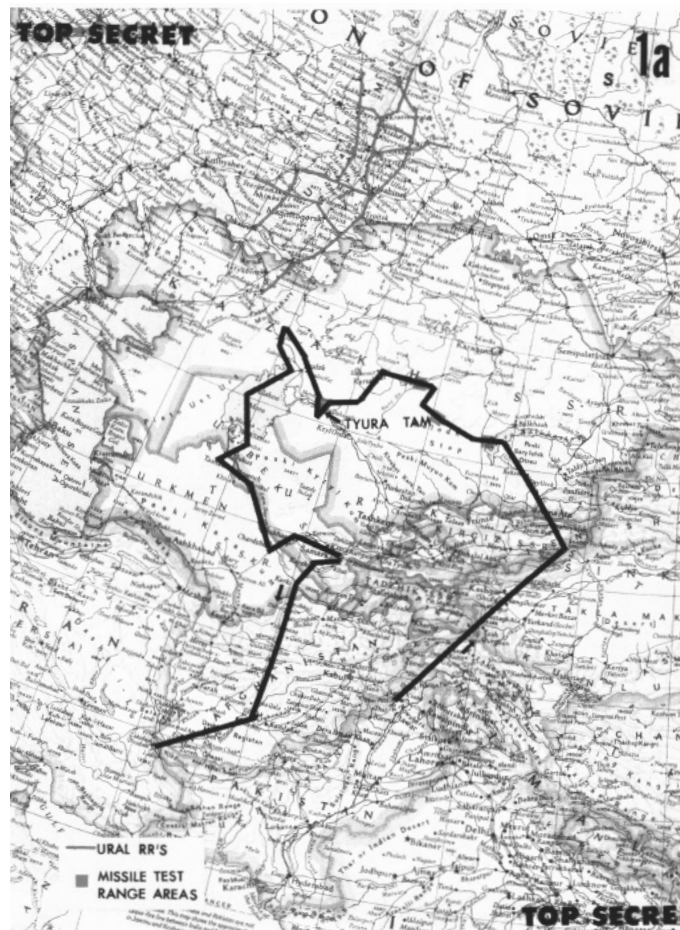
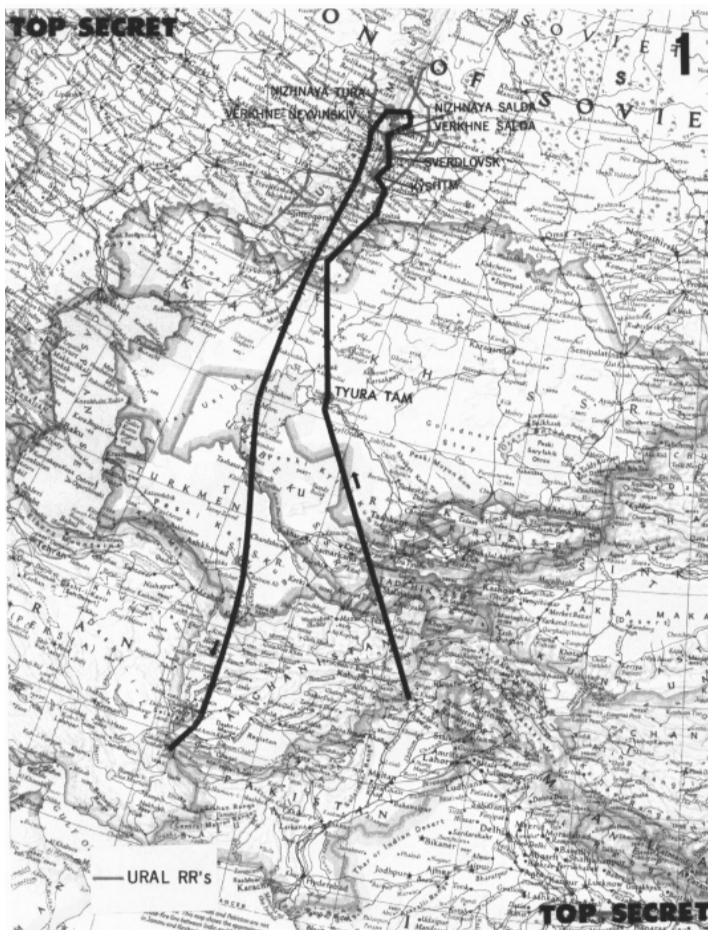
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The CORONA satellite reconnaissance program experienced many failures before Mission 9009, launched on August 18, 1960, resulted in the first successful recovery of satellite images taken of Soviet bases. These first images produced photographic coverage of the Mys Shmida airfield in extreme northeast Siberia.

Thus, late in his administration, after having experienced a sharp deterioration in relations with the Soviet Union following the Soviets' capture of Powers and his aircraft, Eisenhower received a positive intelligence related accomplishment: readable imagery from a satellite orbiting the Earth in outer space. The first images were primitive and limited in information but indicated promises of better things to come. This indeed was the case as the CORONA program lasted until 1972, with the quality of its imagery improving with each successful mission.

Bolstered by the success of CORONA Mission 9009, the President continued to work on improving the U.S. government's intelligence collecting and analysis to the end of his administration. In December 1960, he received a report by the Joint Committee on Foreign Intelligence Activities (often called the Kirkpatrick report since Lyman Kirkpatrick was the committee chairman). This report, declassified in part, made numerous recommendations, some of which led to the eventual establishment of the National Reconnaissance Office and the Defense Intelligence Agency during the Kennedy administration.

The 473rd and 474th meetings of the National Security Council on December 28, 1960, and January 5, 1961, respectively, were devoted largely to discussing this report's recommendations. During the 474th meeting of the NSC, Eisenhower expressed disappointment at his inability to achieve the coordination within the U.S. government's intelligence community for handling, using, and sharing intelligence



that he wanted to see. He therefore in frustration commented that he would leave to his successor “a legacy of ashes.”

Eisenhower’s assessment of his efforts, however, seems too harsh. With the success of the CORONA missions at the end of his administration, the President left a legacy of technological advancement in space-based intelligence collection. Improved versions of CORONA were used until

1972, when they were replaced with more advanced systems. CORONA and its successors have provided U.S. Presidents with accurate intelligence on the Soviet Union and China.

Reconnaissance satellites were, in the 1970s, recognized internationally as the means for policing international arms control agreements. Even the intelligence collected through the U-2 and other aircraft

supported Eisenhower’s conclusion that the United States possessed more long-range missiles than did the Soviet Union and thus no missile gap existed. As Cargill Hall, emeritus chief historian of the National Reconnaissance Office, has concluded, the President, through his reconnaissance programs, particularly CORONA, had indeed achieved his goal of opening the skies over the Soviet Union and China. **P**

NOTE ON SOURCES

The author wishes to express his appreciation for the assistance provided by Chelsea Millner, Michelle Kopfer, Tim Rives, and Kathy Struss of the Eisenhower Library staff and professor Judith Collins, Kansas State University, Salina.

The Records of White House Staff Secretary Andrew Goodpaster constitute the most important source of documentation of the Eisenhower administration’s overhead intelligence-collecting programs. A file consisting of 20 folders entitled “Intelligence Matters” begins with material dated December 1955 and continues through the end of the administration. Found here are memoranda of conferences with the President, and with James Killian, Allen Dulles, Richard Bissell, Edwin Land, Nathan Twining, and many others involved in these programs. This documentation covers balloons, U-2 missions, peripheral missions, data on intelligence targets within the Soviet Union, plans and authorizations for the CORONA reconnaissance satellite program including developing cover for this black operation, and a few items on the Galactic Radiation and Background (GRAB) electronic reconnaissance satellite (referenced in Goodpaster’s records as Project CANES). This satellite, intended to collect electronic intelligence from Soviet radars, was successfully launched on June 22, 1960, two months before the first successful CORONA launch. However, CORONA produced the first photographic images from a reconnaissance satellite. Portions of Goodpaster’s rich intelligence file remain security classified as of 2009.

In addition to the “Intelligence Matters” file, the White House Staff Secretary Records contain other memoranda prepared or received by Goodpaster concerning intelligence including cover material for CORONA. As White House staff secretary, Goodpaster prepared hundreds of memoranda of conferences with the President. Many of his memoranda pertaining to the sensitive intelligence matters covered in this article are found only in the Intelligence file cited above. Most others of his memoranda, including some on intelligence can be found within Dwight D. Eisenhower’s Papers as President (Ann Whitman File), particularly the ACW Diary Series and the DDE Diary Series. The Ann Whitman File contains the richly detailed memoranda of National Security Council meetings. Certain intelligence-related portions remain security classified as of 2009.

The role of the President’s Board of Consultants on Foreign Intelligence Activities (PBCFIA) in advising the President is documented in a body of folders under that board’s name in the Records of the White House Office of the Special Assistant for National Security Affairs as well as in some of Goodpaster’s memoranda of conferences with the President. These files contain the semiannual reports for the President prepared by PBCFIA chairmen James Killian and his successor, John Hull. The Eisenhower Library therefore holds a reasonably good declassified record of the recommendations passed on to the President by this high-level advisory body, although portions remain security classified as of 2009.

As for secondary sources, Cargill Hall, former historian for the National Reconnaissance Office, has written numerous articles on the Eisenhower administration’s overhead intelligence programs, which were the source of information on the SENSINT programs approved early in the Eisenhower administration before Goodpaster became staff secretary. The library holds little on these early aerial reconnaissance programs conducted from 1954 to 1956. Examples of Hall’s writings include “The Truth About Overflights,” *The Quarterly Journal of Military History*, 9 (Spring 1997); “Origins of U.S. Space Policy: Eisenhower, Open Skies, and Freedom of Space,” in John Logsdon et al., eds. *Exploring the Unknown: Selected Documents in the History of the U.S. Civil Space Program, Vol. I: Organizing for Exploration* (Washington, DC: NASA Sp-04407, 1995); “The Eisenhower Administration and the Cold War: Framing American Astronautics to Serve National Security,” *Prologue: Quarterly Journal of the National Archives*, 27 (Spring, 1995); “Postwar Strategic Reconnaissance and the Genesis of Corona” in Dwayne A. Day, John M. Logsdon, and Brian Latell, eds., *Eye in the Sky: The Story of the Corona Spy Satellites* (Washington, DC: Smithsonian Institution, 1998); and “Clandestine Victory: Eisenhower and Overhead Reconnaissance in the Cold War,” in Dennis E. Showalter, ed., *Forging the Shield: Eisenhower and National Security for the 21st Century* (Chicago: Imprint Publications, 2005). Gregory Pedlow and Donald Welzenbach co-authored an official CIA history entitled *The CIA and the U-2 Program, 1954-1974* (Washington, DC: Center for the Study of Intelligence, Central Intelligence Agency, 1998). An essential source for studying the history of the CORONA program is Kevin C. Ruffner, ed., *CORONA: America’s First Satellite Program*, Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1995). Another key source is the two-volume publication edited by R. Cargill Hall and Clayton D. Laurie, *Early Cold War Overflights: Symposium Proceed-*

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Other important secondary sources consulted include Michael Beschloss, *Mayday: Eisenhower, Khrushchev, and the U-2 Affair* (New York: Harper and Row, 1986); Richard M. Bissell, Jr., with Jonathan E. Lewis and Frances T. Pudlo, *Reflections of a Cold Warrior* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1996); Stephen Ambrose and Richard Immerman, *Ike’s Spies: Eisenhower and the Intelligence Community* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1981); and William E. Burrows, *By Any Means Necessary: America’s Secret Air War in the Cold War* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2001).

To encourage research in intelligence documents at the Eisenhower Library, the archival staff developed an exercise intended to introduce participants to high-level primary sources documenting President Eisenhower’s acquisition of aerial intelligence capabilities. This exercise consists of a packet of selected documents spanning the period from November 1954 until September 1960 plus a glossary of terms, lists of key individuals, and suggested sources for background reading. This activity consists of reading and analyzing the packet of intelligence documents and can be modified to fit groups ranging from secondary school classes to U.S. government intelligence analysts. Unlike the Five Star Leaders Program, conducted largely by the Eisenhower Library’s Education Specialist, this intelligence document exercise is conducted entirely by the library’s archives staff.

For further information about this exercise or about documentation in the Eisenhower Library relating to other intelligence topics, please contact the Dwight D. Eisenhower Library staff while also examining the Eisenhower Library’s web site at www.eisenhower.archives.gov.



Author

David Haight was an archivist at the Eisenhower Library for 37 years before retiring in August 2008. He continues to

assist the library as a volunteer in security-declassification matters and with other activities as needed.